

**City of Seattle's Office of Economic Development
Request for Proposals (RFP)
Neighborhood Business District Program
March 1, 2010**

**Informational Meeting Thursday March 4, 2010 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Seattle Municipal Tower Room 4090**

Submittals due 5:00 p.m. Friday April 2, 2010

Introduction

The City of Seattle's Office of Economic Development (OED) is soliciting proposals from non-profit organizations interested in completing projects and/or providing services that benefit a Seattle neighborhood business district.

OED's mission is to provide economic development assistance to businesses, community organizations, and residents to support a strong Seattle economy, thriving neighborhoods and broadly shared prosperity. To further this mission, OED offers a variety of tools and resources for neighborhood business district organizations to promote Seattle's diverse commercial centers, including support for the city's Business Improvement Areas (BIAs).

OED's Neighborhood Business District Program is designed to help neighborhood business district organizations to develop and attain their goals of growing and strengthening the business community in their neighborhoods.

What Type of Organizations Are Eligible?

Applicants must be not-for-profit organizations, with a federal tax ID number, providing services in a Seattle neighborhood business district, such as chambers of commerce, merchant's organizations, and BIAs. Applicants should have an explicitly stated mission or goal of strengthening the business community in their neighborhood. If you have questions about organization eligibility, please contact Karen Selander at 206-733-9256.

New this Year! Multi-Year Projects

In 2010 OED will consider funding projects that build over a multi-year time frame. Multi-year funding is not guaranteed, can only be awarded annually, and depends upon annual city budget allocations. Projects that take more than one year to complete are now eligible for funding in annual increments.

New this Year! City-Wide Buy Local Marketing Campaign

OED is offering the chance to participate in a city - wide buy local marketing program. If chosen to participate, your business district will participate in the development and implementation of a comprehensive buy local marketing campaign. See details below.

What Types of Projects are Encouraged?

City-Wide Buy Local Marketing Program

This year OED is taking a new approach by prioritizing funding for a collaborative, city-wide buy local marketing campaign. Four to six neighborhood business districts will be chosen to work with a branding and marketing consultant to develop and implement a buy local program. The marketing program will incorporate an educational component illustrating the benefits of buying local and will feature the business districts chosen to participate. The outcomes for each district participating may include:

- Consultant services to assist with development and implementation a buy local campaign
- Design and production of buy local district branding, logos, and marketing materials which may include a Seattle buy local brand
- Implementation tools and strategies for launching and sustaining an effective marketing campaign which may include highlighting locally owned independent businesses in your district

Neighborhood business districts interested in this option should fill out the Buy Local Application.

Individual Business District Project Funding

Applicants may apply for project funding of an individual business district project. Neighborhood business districts interested in an individual project should fill out the Individual Project Funding Application. Types of individual projects encouraged include:

- Organizational development - includes projects that strengthen the neighborhood business organization and/or improves understanding of the needs of the businesses within a neighborhood. Some examples are:
 - Neighborhood business district assessment and analysis
 - Creation of business district maps, directories, newsletters
 - Membership recruiting activities
 - Establishing Business Improvement Areas
 - Board training, developing or revising by-laws
- Physical improvement and enhancement projects - include efforts to improve the safety, cleanliness, comfort, and atmosphere of the neighborhood business district. Some examples are:
 - Banners
 - Signage (welcome to the business district, etc.)
 - Projects that encourage tourism in neighborhood business districts
 - Small scale infrastructure projects such as sidewalk repairs, drainage improvements, or tree pit improvements
 - Projects to reduce graffiti in the business district
 - Lighting enhancement (street or pedestrian light additions)
 - Adding benches, trash and recycling cans
 - Flower baskets and planters
 - Seasonal decorations/holiday lights/decorations emphasizing the cultural diversity of the business district

It is also acceptable to apply for either or both the buy local marketing program and an individual neighborhood project.

Who and What Types of Projects Are Not Eligible?

Awards will not be made to individuals, single businesses, institutions (such as universities or hospitals), religious organizations, government agencies, political groups or district councils. Projects that conflict with existing City policy are not eligible.

Funding

OED will provide approximately \$150,000 in 2010 for the Neighborhood Business District Funding Awards Program which will include:

- **Buy Local Marketing Program.** The buy local marketing program will provide consulting services, design and development of materials, and campaign implementation valued at up to \$25,000 for each district chosen to participate.
- **Individual Business District Projects.** The amount of funding available for individual projects will depend on the number and strength of eligible proposals. Funding award amounts for individual projects will be up to \$20,000.

An informational meeting will be held in Room 4090 of the Seattle Municipal Tower on Thursday March 4, 2010 at 10:00 AM -12:00 PM. This meeting is optional for organizations that have questions or need additional information.

Responses

Interested parties should respond to this RFP providing:

- A cover letter stating the name of the organization, contact information, and project name.
- Completed applications (see enclosed applications or visit OED's website <http://www.seattle.gov/economicdevelopment>).
- Seven (7) hard copies of your response must arrive **no later** than 5:00 p.m. on Friday April 2, 2010 to:

City of Seattle's Office of Economic Development
700 Fifth Ave, Suite 5752
PO Box 94708
Seattle, WA 98124-4708
Attn: Karen Selander

- OED retains the right to reject any and all proposals and is not required to award any contract if in its opinion the proposal received failed to meet its requirements.
- All documents and any attachments should be 8-1/2" x 11". **No emails or faxes will be accepted.**

Selection Criteria

Responses will be reviewed by a Committee consisting of staff from OED, staff from other city departments, and other neighborhood business district advocates. The Committee will weigh the following criteria when ranking the responses:

- The host organization and its lead staff have successfully worked with neighborhood business districts and/or the business community in the past and have the capacity to achieve desired results;

- The organization has successfully completed OED funded projects in prior years;
- There is a demonstrated need for the project and it is likely to contribute to an improved business climate in the neighborhood business district;
- The scope, timeline, and budget of the proposal are reasonable;
- The proposal furthers neighborhood plan objectives, if applicable. (Applications are welcome from all neighborhood business districts, not just those within neighborhood planning areas);
- Other funding sources for the proposal exist to leverage OED funds.

Scheduling

RFP released:

March 1, 2010

Informational meeting (optional):

March 4, 2010

Proposals will be due on:

April 2, 2010

Successful applications will be selected by:

April 16, 2010

Project or provision of services completed by:

December 31, 2010

Protest Procedures

In the event that an unsuccessful RFP respondent wishes to protest the selection of a successful respondent, they must do so by submitting in writing the reason for the protest to the Director of OED. Any such protest must be received within three (3) business days of receipt of notification of the successful respondent.

The decision of the Director will be final and conclusive unless the respondent affected makes a written request for reconsideration by the Director. Such a request must be received within three (3) business days after receipt of the Director's decision. A request for reconsideration will be denied unless the respondent affected shows the request is based on information that was not available prior to the protest. The Director shall consider all the facts available and issue a decision within five (5) business days after receipt of the request for rehearing, unless additional time is necessary, in which case, the affected respondent will be notified of the delay.

Women and Minority-Owned Business Use Requirements

There will be no Women and Minority-Owned Business (WMBE) set-aside requirements on the resulting contract. However, in accordance with the Seattle Municipal Code 20.46A, the selected contractor will be required to make affirmative efforts to utilize WMBEs in performing the contract, whether as subcontractors, suppliers, or in any other capacity. The selected contractor must also comply with affirmative action and equal employment opportunity provisions mandated by SMC 20.44.

Fair Contracting Practices Ordinance

The selected contractors will be required to comply with the Fair Contracting Practices Ordinance of the City of Seattle (Ordinance 119601), as amended. Conduct made unlawful by that ordinance constitutes a breach of contract. Engaging in an unfair contracting practice may also result in the imposition of a civil fine or forfeiture under the Seattle Criminal Code as well as various civil remedies.

For questions regarding this RFP, please contact Karen Selander at (206) 733-9256 or karen.selander@seattle.gov